

Ghost Bees, Tasseomancy

shackles for bones
a clover for a better pair of clothes
in the kitchen, she would read the tea leaves
to understand the faithful hand of god

shtetl-skinned and rosewood eyes
an 18-year-old orphan bride
a luckless man was made to fight
the czar's great wars with rash invite
a dagger for impetuousness
a sword for disappointment
the devil for poor influence
a thorn for false importance

but who knew? who knew?
the bitter lament that laid in that brew
which nourished the fetus who dreamt and grew
into a young son who would be forgotten
cradle glass fallen, the swarm of a pogrom

when you wake up
she'll come running
fuss and furrow
to her humming
"mama, mama
hear them, they're coming
to burn our village down"

the arc of a wedding
the arrow of sorrow
the basin that's broken
the bull means to borrow
a coffin, misfortune
a cage of proposal
the fern sees an unfaithful lover
the owl is domestic failure
and grief is the seven stars together

so before you cast your stones
Canada is waiting for you home
look here, i see a boat
Canada is waiting for you home

have you seen him lately?
he's getting friendly with the land lady
send us word, you'll be coming here hastily
you can't raise those children alone

but who knew? who knew?
that bitter lament that laid in that brew
which nourished the fetus, who dreamt and grew
into a dear young son
and grief is where she rests her hand now
and grief is what the father fed now
dearest mother, wife of the Grandfather,
how do we atone?

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